

REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended to their attorney during a February 13, 2004 in-person interview.

As was discussed during the interview, it is Applicants' position that the rejection of claims 3-10 based on 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over European Patent Application No. 0 421 652 A2 to Uyar (hereafter "Uyar") is erroneous.

Uyar does not disclose, teach or suggest testing interconnecting communication systems by causing the systems to perform specified transitions between pairs of at least some operational states, where each operational state pertains to a first operation of a first gateway system associated with a first end user and a corresponding operation of a second gateway system associated with the second user, as in the present invention.

Instead, Uyar is directed at testing whether a single, multi-user system _____ to a standard specification. The phrase "multi-user systems" as used in Uyar does not refer to more than one system. Rather, it refers to the fact that the single multi-user system can be one of many different types. For example, a PBX, or VLSI circuit (see column 1, lines 10-15). In Uyar a number of testers, each separately connected to the multi-user system generates its own set of test sequences in order to test the link between the given tester and the single multi-user system.

The test sequences disclosed in Uyar do not relate to a first operation of a first gateway system associated with a first end user and a second operation of a second gateway system associated with a second end user.

During the in-person interview, the Examiner attempted to make an analogy between the multiple testers in Uyar with the “interconnected communications systems” in the claims. Though Applicants believe this analogy is erroneous, even such an analogy can be made, the testers in Uyar do not perform specified transitions between pairs of at least some operational states where each operational state pertains to a first operation of a first gateway system associated with a first end user and a second operation of a second gateway system associated with a second end user. Instead, these testers, at most, perform transitions related to a single end user and a single, multi-user system.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the present rejections and allowance of claims 3-10.

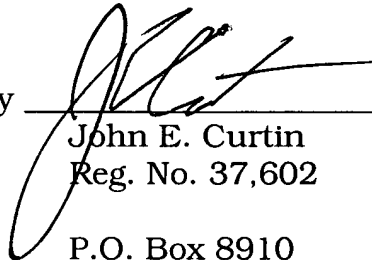
In the event that any matters remain at issue in the application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (703) 668-8000 in the Northern Virginia area, for the purpose of a telephonic interview.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

HARNESS, DICKY & PIERCE, P.L.C.

By

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John E. Curtin", is written over a horizontal line.

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